

A Naturalist by Her Own Design

Ruth Hine a resident of the Apartments since 1992, is full of energy and conviction as she shares her beliefs about the environment. She readily admits she's always wanted to be a naturalist and now she's finally having an opportunity to make that dream a reality.

It should come as no surprise that her interest in the care of the earth is a common theme in her life whether it be volunteer work, her career or her day-to-day hobbies.

Following graduate school at University of Wisconsin-Madison, she accepted a position with the Wisconsin Conservation Department— today, more familiar to us as the Department of Natural Resources. As a biologist editor with various research groups she worked closely with wildlife specialists and had many opportunities to be in the outdoors which she loved.

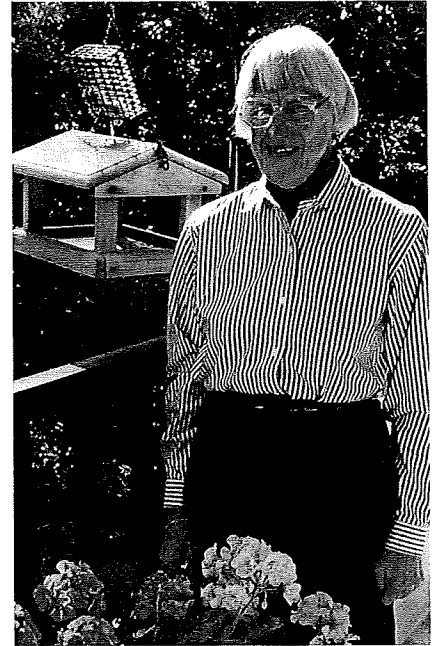
To her credit, Ruth helped initiate the Endangered Resources Program for the State of Wisconsin. What began as a method to track bald eagles and wolves has expanded over the years to include many other species. She is quite proud to see that the program has grown and flourished. Recognition of the program through the commemorative license plate program helps to heighten awareness and received Ruth's approval as she also purchased a set of plates.

After retirement Ruth devoted more time to a variety of community efforts including vol-

unteer work at Bethel Lutheran Church and the University of Wisconsin-Arboretum. As a Bethel member she assisted in starting a nature center at the church retreat, Bethel Horizons near Dodgeville, Wis. Her involvement included training volunteers to be guides and providing exhibits and program information. It was also easy to be active at the University of Wisconsin-Arboretum in Madison as it was practically her backyard when she resided on Nakoma Road. Besides assisting with some activities she helps serve the lunches held there several times a year which are open to the public— each one a sell-out. These days Ruth also busies herself with a wildflower garden in Oakwoods' woods, genealogy and service on Oakwood's Long Range Planning Committee.

Admittedly influenced by the work of well-known Wisconsin naturalist, Aldo Leopold, Ruth says, "It's only after being aware of what's around us do we develop an understanding of what nature is like. This understanding brings love, which in turn makes one realize that each one of us can help take care of the earth." If the earth is to be saved it must be a shared responsibility, between those who inhabit the planet and the planet itself. One might liken it to a true friendship that only prospers with nurturing from both participants. There is much to be gained from having the earth be our friend.

That message of understand-



ing is shared by Ruth's longtime friend Hazel Hiemstra. Their paths crossed over 30 years ago when Hazel visited Ruth as a new Bethel church member. Three decades later their kinship is evident through their mutual interests of travel, outdoors, photography and appreciation of the planet. A few of their favorite destinations include Africa, Australia and Egypt. Their apartment walls echo their love of nature with an array of landscape, bird and wildlife paintings and photographs filling every possible inch of space.

As Ruth points out a few of her favorites, each seems to tell a story of its own. That story is personified by Ruth's appreciation for the earth. Whether in her backyard or a far away continent, she is determined to raise people's awareness of the earth and seems to do so naturally. □